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STANFORD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE  
Department of Genetics

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APR 29 1974

Dr. Nathaniel I. Berlin  
Director, Division of Cancer  
Biology and Diagnosis  
National Cancer Institute  
National Institutes of Health  
Bethesda, Maryland 20014

Dear Dr. Berlin,

Thank you for your letter of April 22. As you know, we also were visited by a site review committee last Friday, which was a most useful communication in several respects. We obtained a much clearer understanding of the mission of your division and its contracts program and we received a number of important and useful suggestions about the detailed conduct of our proposed research. I think there was a consensus that an augmentation of our effort towards seeking biochemical indicators of neoplastic processes would be a timely and efficient extension of our existing activities in biochemical screening for genetic abnormality. With this in mind, we indeed look forward to the possibility of a contract award to make this possible.

With respect to participation in the proposed meeting at Williamsburg on June 10-12 I have asked my colleague Dr. Alan Duffield whether he would attend as this period entails an impossible conflict of time for myself. He is indeed eager to do so and will prepare the requisite abstract covering some preliminary work that had been done recently on the excretion of beta-amino butyric acid in leukemia. It would be most helpful to have the reactions and criticisms of the group of other participants to these findings. We will then await your approval for his designation. Dr. Duffield is the person primarily responsible for the laboratory work under our proposed contract and his biography and publications were submitted in our proposal.

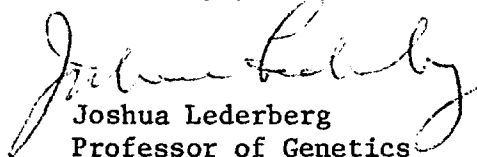
If I may take the occasion to request some help in a rather different direction, I would be quite interested to know if you have set up any specific information services within your division, or in any event whether you could provide me with comprehensive bibliographies covering different lines of work relating to our own proposal for biochemical signatures. We are, of course, not totally ignorant of the literature but have not made as systematic an effort to scan it as the problem deserves, particularly in the light of the pending augmentation of our efforts in this direction.

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The specific arena we would be concerned with would include low molecular weight metabolites, upon which we are concentrating ourselves; it would be an impossible burden to also digest the material that has accumulated on antigenic and enzymatic alterations as well.

I may also take the liberty, if I may, to communicate with you further in future with respect to enlisting your assistance in some collaborative efforts that may entail the collection of specimens held at the NCI or at other institutions for which our own analytical methodology may be particularly apt. Conversely, let me assure you that we would be quite receptive to running a limited number of samples proposed by other investigators who may believe them to contain useful leads. I need hardly caution you, however, that our overall resources for running samples for GC-mass spectrometry must be viewed realistically as being finitely limited and such arrangements will have to be reconsidered ad hoc. But the spirit is there and we would like to respond to such possibilities to the limit of our capabilities.

Sincerely yours,



Joshua Lederberg  
Professor of Genetics

JL/rr